

CHRISTIAN REINCARNATION

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Treasure New and Old Matthew 13:52

Has your religious training included the Old Testament teachings on reincarnation? Did you know that God's Chosen People of that time fully accepted the concept of reincarnation - reassignment to earth in new physical bodies?

Are you aware of Jesus Christ's teaching of reincarnation as a factual part of much of man's education process? Did you know that Christendom taught reincarnation for hundreds of years? Have you been told the teaching of reincarnation was eventually forbidden by the First Ecumenical Council (at Nicaea) for purely political reasons?

Have you ever considered the teaching against Christian reincarnation being one of the great number of "tares" sown by the enemy man in the field of good wheat - tares which our Lord indicated now almost obscure the wheat? There are many more, yet anyone can learn to differentiate!

Become aware of "Babylon's" dreadful confusion of Truth yet being forced upon all professing Christians. This study presents but one example of the pervading problem. There is more help for earnest believers in other "TREASURES NEW AND OLD" from

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If your Christian experience is not even more than you had hoped it would be by now, order some. Find out why, and learn what to do about it.

Christian Reincarnation

Several students have asked about Matt. 11:14, in which Jesus seems to be saying Elijah reincarnated as John the Baptist. Many think of reincarnation as unChristian doctrine. You also may now wonder about the truth of the matter. Perhaps we can here cite help in the wholeness of God's Word; but it would be so much easier if we were talking face to face and opening the Scriptures together. Because of having been over this ground of reincarnation with others, it seems the subject might best be handled in stages. This would be a first stage--potentially to be continued further on another day. We know little of your background, except it is at least nominally Christian. You know not much more of ours, although it has enabled a showing of "new treasure" in The Lord's Day book and other studies.

At the very beginning, here is a suggestion you may or may not be able to follow, even if you are completely willing. We will do well to approach the question from a different perspective. Reincarnation, as the eastern religions teach it, is not a Christian doctrine. But would you put out of your mind, for the moment, everything you have been taught or have thought you have come to know about reincarnation. Are you willing? Are you able to do so--temporarily? Can you refrain from bringing any of past impressions on the subject into this exploration of Scripture? It may be too much to ask. Nevertheless, to the extent you do, our investigation can go more rapidly and can be more accurately aligned with the Truth of John 14:6 and 16:135.

Your two most important books, without exception, are the Bible (one of the more literal translations) and a good English dictionary. Reincarnation means embodiment in human form--again. The oriental use of the word has acquired a more specialized meaning, as it also has in occidental versions of eastern usage. From John

1:1, 14, 1 Pet. 1:11 and elsewhere, we can understand the Spirit indwelling the body of Jesus Christ was the Yahweh God of the Old Testament. At the beginning of our age or eon, He incarnated. At about age 33, He was murdered on the Cross. A few hours later, He re-embodied Himself in that physical form which unquestionably had died. And it became a glorified body. Simply put, Jesus reincarnated--by definition of the term. That is not too difficult to see. There are no ifs, ands, or buts about it. That was a valid reincarnation which certainly has been, now is, and ever will be Christian teaching.

Now, if the foregoing has been digested, would you be willing to do some completely independent thinking, with Bible in hand and mind engaged in it? (Remember, all past understanding of the reincarnation subject is to be kept out--for a while.) We will try here to stick exclusively to Bible facts. Thoughtfully look now at some few passages and prepare yourself to restate exactly what the printed words relate. Reading between the lines is not permissible, nor is the addition of any of man's religious commentary. We will restrict ourselves to what the words actually report. First, we will look at statements on John the Baptist. Then we will look for parallels elsewhere.

Matt. 16:13-14--"Some say the Son of man is John the Baptist, or Elijah, or one of the other prophets." The Jews were trained in the Old Testament teachings. How is it they had accepted this idea of reincarnation? They knew Jesus grew up in Galilee. They knew John had just recently been murdered. Why did not the Lord rebuke them for even entertaining such rubbish--if it was rubbish? Mal. 4:5--"I will send you Elijah the prophet before the day of the great and revered Lord comes." (It is more fitting to attach the "great and feared" to the Lord Himself.) That "day" was the period of several decades during which Jesus Christ lived and His teachings offered in Palestine. In about 440 B.C., He did

not say He would resurrect Elijah, or how He would send him--not to Malachi. But there was the promise of Elijah's return. Matt. 17:10-13- The scribes knew how to properly understand the Mal. 4:5 prophecy. To that understanding, Jesus agreed. He said (literal translation), "Elijah does come and does get everything ready (now, in this period of time). I tell you Elijah has already come, and they didn't recognize him but did to him as they liked (cut off his head)." The disciples knew Jesus spoke of John the Baptist. The Lord did not seek to alter their understanding. Now, what information do the words in these passages present to your mind? You know John was Elizabeth's baby. But Jesus said that human spirit was Elijah. Let's go further. Matt. 11:14-15--"John himself is Elijah." "If you are willing to receive (it), John is Elijah (to you), Elijah who was to come (before the King)." Then follows the phrase alerting readers to think carefully and accurately, utilizing only foundational information contained in the whole Word of God (Matt. 4:4). He who has correctly tuned ears, let him hear. In these passages, the English words are clearly put; the language is not circuitous. The meaning is plainly to be seen by anyone untaught in eastern religion's reincarnation. Don't you agree?

With a different cast of actors, we find the same subject in Jer. 31:15-17. All truth is confirmed by two witnesses, said our Lord. "Rachel (the Jewish nation) weeps for her children, because they are not (have been killed)....But says the Lord, (Your children) shall return from the enemy's land (Sheol or Hades, the place of the dead)....Your children shall come again into their own country." Matt. 2:17-18--Then was the Jeremiah prophecy fulfilled (part of it). "...Rachel weeping for her children... because they were no more (murdered by Herod)." We have no foundation for insisting that the Jeremiah prophecy spoke only of resurrection, or even considered it. Elsewhere, the Lord spoke of

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resurrection for some. Isa. 26:19-20--"Your dead shall live;...the earth shall cast forth the dead...Hide yourselves for a little while, until the (Lord's) wrath has past." Ps. 110:3--"Your people will offer themselves...in the day of your power....To You (will spring forth) your young men who are as the dew." "Until the Lord's wrath has past" and "in the day of your power" tie in with Rev. 20:6, the first resurrection. Jesus certainly knew the word for resurrection, but He made no effort to allude to it in Matt. 1:17-18. Also the Rev. 20:6 first resurrection is for adults, those who have overcome. Neither did the Jer. 31 statement promise that "Rachel" would have other children.

Going again to the words of Jesus Christ in Matt. 23:35, we read of His accusing certain scribes and pharisees. "You murdered (Zechariah)..." Do you recall God's repeated rule that each person will answer only for his own sins? Was Jesus lying? Did He not know with whom He was talking? Is it not true He spoke only what His Father gave Him to speak? Is not the meaning clear and in need of no private interpretation? Does this not refer to yet another returning in new baby bodies, as in the case of Elijah-John the Baptist? There is great need to think straight, in order to see God's truth.

There are several more places in the Bible to which we could go, but let's take but one for this time around. Zech. 12:10--"And they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced..." The time context is when there is a siege against Jerusalem and the peoples of the nations reeling in a world war setting identified with Armageddon (Zech. 12:2, 3, 9, 11). There was a partial fulfillment of the setting in 70 A.D., but look at Rev. 1:7. "When He is coming in the clouds (of His saints--Jude 14), every eye will see Him--even those who pierced Him...." What is said in uncomplicated language is that some who were responsible for the death of Jesus Christ at the

Cross, rejecting Him then, will be alive again at His coming, still not with Him. Certainly these are not of the Rev. 20:4, 6 first resurrection number!

This much searching of Scripture "to see if these things are so" is probably enough to fill the mind for a beginning. When you have come to a firm understanding of what you have just seen in the Word of God, you might like to go another step or two. There is a considerable amount of material available on how the loving Father plans for and works with His children to bring them fully to Him--not willing to lose any. One such study of great value is "Who Are You--Where Have You Been All This Time."

May His love more and more engulf you. May you more and more enthrone Him in your heart, that He might glorify your life.

C. G. Wolcott

There is no other God besides Me, a righteous and just God and Savior. There is none besides Me. Look to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth! For I am God (the Mighty One), and there is no other. I have sworn by Myself, the Word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness and shall not rebound (but penetrate) that unto Me every knee shall bow (conform), every tongue shall swear (cooperation). Only in the Lord (in His plan) shall one say, I have righteousness and strength. To Him shall all come who were incensed against Him, and shall (come) ashamed. (Isa. 45:21-24, Matt. 18:14, 2Pet. 3:9, Ro. 14:10-11) What loving father would not give another chance, and another to one who is willing to learn and practice! Why have the religionists made Him a tyrant, if not to keep people through fear?